RLG Preservation Working Group On Digital Archiving

19 February 1997

The Research Libraries Group and the Commission on Preservation and Access jointly supported a task force in 1995-96 to produce a set of recommendations on ensuring the long-term preservation of digital information. A draft report was distributed widely in late summer 1995; shortly thereafter, groups in the UK, Australia, and elsewhere met to review the draft as a means of assessing its relevance outside of North America. PRESERV liaisons were encouraged to submit responses individually to the task force co-chairs. Comments received from a variety of sources were reviewed and the final report was published in Spring 1996. Since then, groups in the UK and Australia have conducted formal reviews of the task force's recommendations and established programs of work to move the digital archiving agenda forward as part of their national preservation effort.

The Working Group on Digital Archiving is tasked to formally review and analyze the task force report and to assess the work plans of similar groups in the UK and Australia in order to recommend areas of action for RLG to pursue either alone or in partnership with others. Members will be drawn from the Preservation and Primary Sources constituencies.

Objectives and timetable:

1. Read and analyze the RLG/CPA Report on Preserving Digital Information, with specific attention to the recommendations for further action;
2. Review the workplan of preservation studies (Long Term Preservation of Electronic Materials, Preservation of Digital Materials: Policy and Strategy Issues for the UK and Preservation of Electronic Materials: a Programme of Studies funded by the Joint Information Systems Committee of the Higher Education Funding Councils) as outlined by the National Preservation Office (UK/Ireland) and the Joint Information Systems Committee;
3. Review the work of the National Library of Australia in relation to its digital archiving assertions and intentions;
4. Identify and review the work of other relevant bodies worldwide that have issued formal programmatic responses to the RLG/CPA report;
5. Summarize findings and recommend follow-on activities for RLG to pursue, including (but not limited to) consortial projects and initiatives as well as joint efforts with other organizations.

Timetable: Preliminary report due April 15, 1997; final report due August 1, 1997.

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